

Common Sounds

This decibel (dB) table compares some common sounds and shows how they rank in potential harm to hearing.

| Sound | Noise Level (dB) | Effect |
|-------------------------------|------------------|--|
| Boom Cars | 145 | Threshold of pain begins around 125 dB |
| Jet Engines (near) | 140 | |
| Shotgun Firing | 130 | |
| Jet Takeoff (100–200 ft.) | 110–140 | |
| Rock Concerts (varies) | 121 | |
| Oxygen Torch | 121 | Threshold of sensation begins around 120 dB |
| Discotheque/Boom Box | 120 | |
| Thunderclap (near) | 110–125 | |
| Stereos (over 100 watts) | 110 | |
| Symphony Orchestra | 105 | |
| Power Saw (chainsaw) | 103 | Regular exposure to sound over 100 dB of more than one minute risks permanent hearing loss |
| Pneumatic Drill/Jackhammer | 103 | |
| Snowmobile | 103 | |
| Jet Flyover (1000 ft.) | 103 | |
| Electric Furnace Area | 100 | |
| Garbage Truck/Cement Mixer | 100 | No more than 15 minutes of unprotected exposure recommended for sounds between 90–100 dB |
| Farm Tractor | 98 | |
| Newspaper Press | 97 | |
| Subway, Motorcycle (25 ft.) | 88 | |
| Lawnmower, Food Blender | 85–90 | |
| Recreational Vehicles, TV | 70–90 | 85 dB is the level at which hearing damage (8 hrs.) begins |
| Diesel Truck (40 mph, 50 ft.) | 84 | |
| Average City Traffic | 80 | |
| Garbage Disposal | 80 | |
| Washing Machine | 78 | |
| Dishwasher | 75 | Annoying; interferes with conversation; constant exposure may cause damage |
| Vacuum Cleaner, Hair Dryer | 70 | |
| Normal Conversation | 50–65 | |
| Quiet Office | 50–60 | |
| Refrigerator Humming | 40 | |
| Whisper | 30 | Very Quiet |
| Broadcasting Studio | 30 | |
| Rustling Leaves | 20 | |
| Normal Breathing | 10 | |
| | | |
| | | The threshold of normal hearing starts at about 1000 to 4000kHz. |

